



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Emergency Beacon Registrations

**AGENCY:** National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of Information Collection, request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before (insert date 60 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER).

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at [Adrienne.thomas@noaa.gov](mailto:Adrienne.thomas@noaa.gov). Please reference OMB Control Number 0648-0295 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to: LT Marisa Gedney,

SARSAT Operations Support Officer, NOAA/NESDIS/SARSAT, NSOF. E/SPO53 4231  
Suitland Rd, Suitland MD 20746, (202) 709-3202, [OPS.SARSAT@NOAA.GOV](mailto:OPS.SARSAT@NOAA.GOV).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

## *I. Abstract*

The United States, Canada, France, and Russia operate the Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking (COSPAS/SARSAT), a satellite system with equipment that can detect and locate ships, aircraft and individuals in distress if an emergency radio beacon is being carried. This system is used to detect digitally encoded signals in the 406.000-406.100 MHz range, coming from these emergency beacons. The 406.000-406.100 MHz beacons transmit a unique identifier, making possible the ability to combine previously collected data associated with that beacon and transmit this vital data along with the beacon's position to the appropriate rescue coordination center.

Persons buying 406.000-406.100 MHz emergency radio beacons are required to register them with NOAA prior to installation. These requirements are contained in Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations at 47 CFR 80.1061, 47 CFR 87.199 and 47 CFR 95.1402.

The registration data is used to facilitate a rescue and to suppress the costly consequences of false alarms, which if unsuppressed would initiate the launch of a rescue mission and thereby deplete limited resources and possibly result in the loss of lives. This is accomplished through the use of the data provided to the rescue forces from the beacon registration database maintained by the NOAA's United States Mission Control Center (USMCC) for Search and Rescue, to contact the distressed person(s) or alternate party via a phone call or radio broadcast. Other data provides rescuers with descriptive material of the element in distress. The registration information must be kept up-to-date.

Four registration forms are used. The EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) form is used for nautical beacons. The ELT (Emergency Locator Transmitter) form is used for aircraft beacons. The PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) is used to register portable beacons carried by individuals. Ship Security Alerting System (SSAS) beacons are carried aboard ships, are similar to EPIRBs and are used in the event of an emergency situation such

as piracy or terrorism.

These forms are being updated in response to the development of 406MHz second generation beacons (SGBs), which are in development and are projected to be available to the public in 2023. Changes to the forms are as follows:

**23-Hex Beacon ID line:** SGBs have 23-character hexadecimal unique identifiers. NOAA's 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database (RGDB) currently allows registrations for first generation beacons (FGBs) that contain 15-character hexadecimal identifiers. Once SGBs are on the market, beacon owners will have the capability to register either FGBs or SGBs in the RGDB. Even though each registration will be for only one beacon ID, the hardcopy registration form must contain separate lines for FGBs and SGBs due to the differing number of characters and their presentation on manufacture labels and packaging—FGB IDs are presented in groups of 5-5-5 and SGB IDs will be 6-6-6-5.

**Old 23-Hex ID:** This field was added to enable registration of a replacement SGB beacon. The RGDB will continue to capture data for both FGB and SGB replacements.

**Beacon Serial No.:** This field was added to capture the beacon's serial number, which appears on the manufacturer-supplied label and/or on the beacon or its packaging. The serial number provides additional verification of the beacon ID and can be used by RGDB staff to resolve cases of incorrect or duplicate beacon IDs.

**Other:** An Automatic Identification System (AIS) Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number was added to the EPIRB form. The following fields were added to the PLB form to provide additional pertinent information to search and rescue (SAR) forces: Radio Call Sign (on EPIRB form), Vessel MMSI # (on EPIRB form), AIS MMSI # (just added to EPIRB form), and Aircraft Registration (Tail) No. (on ELT form).

## *II. Method of Collection*

Respondents may either: 1) obtain the forms electronically via the Internet at

<https://beaconregistration.noaa.gov>, download, complete, sign and mail or fax or 2) register directly on the website, in which case the signature requirement is waived.

### *III. Data*

*OMB Control Number:* 0648-0295.

*Form Number(s):* None

*Type of Review:* Regular submission: Revision

*Affected Public:* Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit organizations; Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local, or Tribal government; Federal government

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 337,241

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 15 minutes

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 84,311

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$2,282,298.77

*Respondent's Obligation:* Mandatory

*Legal Authority:* Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations at 47 CFR 80.1061, 47 CFR 87.199 and 47 CFR 95.1402.

### *IV. Request for Comments*

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before

including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

*Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Commerce  
Department.*

[FR Doc. 2021-27399 Filed: 12/16/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/17/2021]